

July 8, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Dalton B. Floyd, Jr., Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

FROM: Dr. Vermelle J. Johnson, Chairman, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of Request to Renew License
Lesley University, Cambridge, MA
M.Ed., Technology in Education
M.Ed., Curriculum and Instruction in
1) Creative Arts and 2) Literacy: Language, Reading, Writing

Summary

Lesley University www.lesley.edu requests renewal of its license to offer programs leading to the M.Ed. in Technology in Education and to the M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction with specializations in 1) Creative Arts in Learning and 2) Literacy: Language, Reading, and Writing.

The Commission on Higher Education licensed Lesley University in May 1994. Lesley currently offers its programs in 15 sites throughout the state.

| Location | Site | Date initiated |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Anderson/Piedmont | Wren High School | 4/26/02 |
| Beaufort | Lady's Island Elementary School | 9/10/01 |
| Beaufort/Bluffton | McCracken Middle School | 9/16/01 |
| Beaufort/Burton | Joseph S. Shanklin Elementary School | 4/19/02 |
| Beaufort/Hampton | Ben Hazel Primary School | 3/7/03 |
| Charleston | Springfield Elementary School | 12/8/00 |
| Charleston/North Charleston | North Charleston High School | 4/26/02 |
| Columbia/Gilbert | Gilbert Middle School | 6/11/99 |
| Columbia/West Columbia | Lakewood Educational Center | 9/26/97 |

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| Florence | South Florence High School | 2/9/01 |
| Location | Site | Date initiated |
| Florence | Carver Elementary School | 2/9/01 |
| Myrtle Beach | Carolina Forest High School | 8/27/97 |
| Orangeburg | Edisto High School | 11/1/02 |
| Spartanburg/Duncan | Beech Springs Intermediate School | 7/19/02 |
| Sumter | Lakewood High School | 4/12/02 |

Lesley University was founded in 1909 as a professional school for women in early childhood education. The University offers a variety of graduate and undergraduate programs on its Cambridge campus and in regional, national, and international locations. The Graduate School was established in 1954 as a center of advanced professional training for men and women in teaching. Combined on and off campus enrollment in graduate programs exceeds 9,000 a year. The average age of students in the master's degree programs is 37 years, and they are working professionals. Classes are scheduled at convenient evening and weekend hours tailored to meet the needs of non-traditional students. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) has accredited Lesley since 1952.

It is customary for the staff to conduct program reviews and make recommendations concerning licensure of degree-granting institutions. Because of the non-traditional nature of the programs that Lesley University offers and because the programs are graduate level, the staff sought assistance with the review of these programs from four area experts.

Dennis Wiseman, Ph.D., Associate Provost of Academics, Coastal Carolina University, reviewed Technology in Education; Charles E. Matthews, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor Emeritus, College of Charleston, and Tina Marshall-Bradley, Ph.D., Office of Teacher Education, Division of Teacher Quality, reviewed Literacy; Deborah Smith Hoffman, Ph.D., Education Associate, Visual and Performing Arts, South Carolina Department of Education, reviewed Creative Arts.

Lesley University officials provided the renewal application and exhibits and the licensing staff forwarded the materials to the reviewers. With the exception of creative arts (because of illness the reviewer did not file a report with the Commission), the reports of the reviewers are attached (Attachment 1). Three of the four reviewers also visited a class. Lesley University officials then provided additional information to address the reports. The licensing staff wishes to express its appreciation for the extraordinary time and effort that the reviewers committed to the process.

The following is a summary of the programs and the reviewers' findings. The application materials, reports, responses, and surveys are available from the licensing staff for your review if you desire additional information.

The programs are offered in an intensive weekend format. Each three-credit-hour course is scheduled for two weekends, separated by two to four weeks, with students attending class on Friday evening and all day on Saturday and Sunday. Students register for a course two weeks before the first weekend seminar. Assignments, readings, and other activities are presented to students before the class. Students are expected to complete required assignments before the first class session, between the class sessions, and after the last session. Students have access to the course instructor, a program advisor, a faculty advisor, and the program director when necessary. Local site coordinators serve as liaisons between the students and Lesley. Some of their duties are to order textbooks, collect registration forms and payments, distribute forms, books, evaluations, and information of any changes in schedule or procedures, and notify the University's administration about concerns or issues (such as the site, lodging, book orders).

The 33 credit-hour program in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in Creative Arts in Learning is designed for teachers who wish to develop individual creativity and to integrate the arts into the school curriculum. Dr. Hoffman found the curriculum current, relevant, practical, and aligned with the objectives of the program.

The 33-credit-hour program in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in Literacy: Language, Reading, and Writing is designed to train teachers to use a variety of methods and strategies that are central to teaching students to read, write, speak, and listen. Students are employed in schools or other agencies. The reviewers found the curriculum adequate for further developing the professional competence of classroom teachers. The syllabi in the theory and methodology courses indicate that attention is provided to the important areas of literacy education. It appears that students receive adequate evaluation of the work submitted. The faculty members (core and adjunct) hold appropriate credentials and experience to teach the graduate courses. Both reviewers of this program advised in their reports that Lesley exercise diligence to assure that faculty members provide attention to supervision and evaluation of the adjunct and that faculty members provide timely and thorough feedback to students. Based on comments by students, Lesley must also take steps to shore up the administration of financial aid for off-campus students.

The 33 credit-hour program in Technology in Education is designed for teachers who wish to enhance their skills and knowledge in the area of technology within the school curriculum. The report of Dr. Wiseman confirmed that the faculty members are especially qualified for their instructional assignments and that the courses have substantive content and appropriate rigor. The report also included several suggestions for Lesley officials to consider in the areas of aligning the program with the mission and strategic plans of the districts in which the Lesley students teach; collaborating between districts, participants, and program faculty; and following-up with graduates and school

districts to assess the impact of program participation by teachers on their places of employment.

Staff Recommendation

The staff suggests that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission approval of renewal of the license for Lesley University for five years, subject to staff approval of facilities as they are developed, and grant to Lesley University authority to offer two programs leading to the M.Ed. degree in Computers in Education and the M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction with specializations in 1) Creative Arts and 2) Literacy: Language, Reading, and Writing.

Committee Recommendation

The Committee meets on July 7, 2004, and will present its recommendation at the CHE meeting.